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(25 September 1952)

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REPUBLICAN COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESSES

Georgian SSR

Steeped in Corruption: In a long speech delivered before the Georgian 15th Party Congress and broadcast from Tbilisi in three installments (September 16, 17 and 18), Communist Boss Mgeladze imputes most of the economic and ideological failings to the former Party leadership which, he declares, had departed from the "Stalin traditions." The list of failures recited by the speaker is indeed so far reaching in its implications as to make the political future of any Communist Party extremely doubtful. Mgeladze's repeated sallies against the unorthodox behavior of the former leadership of the Georgian Communist Party suggest the belief that those comrades have gone the way of all purges following a Moscow scrutiny into their affairs. They are even charged with such "unspeakable" crimes as trying to undermine the "monolithic unity" and the "single will" of the Party in the past years. The present widespread corruption in the Republic's economic and ideological life as well as within the Communist Party is conveniently referred to as the "heritage of the previous leadership" the elimination of which is admittedly painfully slow. The speaker is also frank enough to name the consumer as the major victim of Party and Government corruption at all levels: "He has been systematically cheated and shortchanged."

The task of apprehending and punishing the assorted criminals in and out of the Government and Party machinery is said to be made infinitely more difficult by the fact that these law breakers, when haled into court, are often faced by their own ilk on the bench or within the Department of Justice. But the legal apparatus of the Republic is now undergoing a thorough cleansing, according to the speaker, and the administration of justice is reportedly improving. The merciless fight against the plunderers of socialist property, bribe-takers and embezzlers is going full tilt, and the law is emerging triumphant, "just as the Party requires."

Significant though unspecific reference is made to the un-Bolshevik tendencies of local authorities to establish so-called patronage (shelistvo) areas of their own. The word patronage, however, is a mild rendition of what Mgeladze has in mind, appearing as it does in context of divisive activities on the part of certain unnamed officials: extreme vigilance in this sphere must not be relaxed. Georgia, he says, would have been partitioned into "principalities" (knyazhestva) long ago had not such enemies of the people as Zvaniya, Mengreliya and Iatoga been effectively resisted by the Communist Party:

We have no guarantee that new pretenders to chieftainship will not appear. There is some ground for this in Georgia. As is known, the division and looting of Georgia has always been promoted by the enemies of the Georgian people. Such attempts were made also under Soviet rule. Those who are seeking to divide Georgia and to exercise chieftainship over separate provinces or to set one province against another will be crushed the Stalin way.

Russian text:

U nas net garantii, chto ne poyavyatsya kakienibud novye pretendenty na shefstvo. V Gruzii yest dlya etogo koy-kakaya pochva. Kak izvestno, deleniye i razgrableniye Gruzii izdrevnya vseгда sposobstvovali vragi gruzinskogo naroda. Byli popytki k etomu i pri sovetskoy vlasti. Vse te, kto pytayetsya razgrabit Gruzii, shefstvovat nad otdelnymi eyo provintsiyami ili protivopostavlyat ikh drug drugu budut po-stalinski sorkusheny.

The Secretary's account of the Republic's economic and political achievements and failures, as listed below, is on the whole a graphic summation of all the radio and press strictures in those fields since the Fifth Party Congress. The overall output in heavy industry, it is claimed, is steadily increasing and production by and large is according to plan. The Central Committee, however, is not blind to the failings hidden

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behind the imposing figures of the plan-fulfilling industries. The oil industry, for example, is said to have exceeded its quota for the first seven months of this year by 2 percent, but is nevertheless "working in a manner which is wholly unsatisfactory." The prewar production level has not been reached, and the plan for prospective drilling is still "very unsatisfactory." A significant number (znachitelnoye chislo) of wells have not been drilled to the requisite depth due to frequent breakdowns.

Building Materials: Large scale construction is said to be hampered by the shortage of cement, brick, tile, stone, lime, gravel, sand and other local materials. There is no visible effort on the part of the Ministry of the Building Materials Industry to ease the scarcity of the mentioned items many of which, particularly brick and tile, are also of very poor quality. The brick and tile factories are going about improving the quality of their products in a "very unsatisfactory manner."

Power: Production is still above plan but the output "falls seriously short of the demands of our national economy." In respect to potential hydroelectric power Georgia is said to hold "one of the first places in the world," but potential power cannot be used in actual production. The present paramount task of the industry is to step up the construction of hydroelectric plants for "we still lack electric power."

Capital Construction, according to Mgelaдзе, presents "a rather unattractive picture." Only 42 percent of the annual plan could be accounted for by 1 August, and the construction of all-union (federal) buildings is still slower. The same applies to civilian housing and to every other type of building: "Not one of the Republican Ministries or Departments is fulfilling its plan."

Foodstuffs Industry is said to show "average positive indices" which conceal a multitude of sins. It is still largely unmechanized and refrigeration facilities are far too inadequate. Numerous enterprises are still unable to cope with their chronic failings. In the meat and dairy industry, for example, the assortment of the basic types of production "is grossly violated," the standard of quality is low, and "above-plan losses" (nadplanovie poteri) and spoilage do not seem to disturb the management. Low quality is also said to characterize the output of the local and cooperative industries which cater to consumers:

As a result of the violation of technological processes,
one local industry delivered only 9 percent goods of first quality.

The cooperative industry, on the other hand, is reported to be lagging behind in quantity as well as quality production. Twelve million 800 thousand rubles' worth of planned goods "were not delivered" to the State, and the products released by "most of the artels" are of such low quality that there is no demand for them.

The Georgian consumer, says Mgelaдзе, is also feeling the squeeze from another direction--the retail trade organizations whose "non-fulfillment of the plan" is coupled with the practice of "cheating the consumers and violating their interests." Castigated in this connection are the "lame excuses" given by the Ministry of Local Industries and the Georgian Industrial Council (Gruzpromsoviet) for their unfair treatment of the consumer. The "insufficient funds and resources" they allude to in self-defense are believed to be so much poppycock, since their overexpenditures (pereraskhody) and other unaccountable squandering run into millions of rubles. These organizations, it is asserted

undersupplied (nedodali) 45 million 400 thousand rubles' worth of goods in 1951, and 26 million 900 thousand rubles' worth in the first quarter of this year.

The issue must be faced squarely and the squanderers called by their proper names if the situation is to be improved, the Secretary says. The reason the retail trade machinery is functioning so badly is because it is shot through with "dishonest people, speculating elements and persons with criminal records" engaging in embezzlement, speculation, bribery and fleecing the consumer. The difficulties involved in combating these evils may be

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gathered from the cryptic reference to the public prosecution and court authorities and the dubious value of their assistance in the matter: "All such shortcomings ... would have been considerably fewer if the prosecuting organs and the courts had fought decisively" against them.

Theft, speculation and fraud are frequently referred to also in the discussion of summer resorts, social insurance and other public welfare activities. Georgia, says Mgeladze, is one of the most popular resort places in the Soviet Union, as witness the growing number of holiday-makers arriving annually to enjoy the Republic's sanatoria and rest homes. But

most of our resorts are not assured a water supply, sewers, electric energy, bath-laundry enterprises, welfare parks... and living quarters for the working personnel.

In social insurance, a number of officials exposed for "illegal activities and squandering of State funds" have already been relieved of their duties but the evil has not yet been entirely eliminated. Urban construction in the country is said to be so backward and some of the methods employed so primitive that if the capital is to be used as a criterion, the builders are "at least 10 to 15 years" behind the times. (There is no further amplification of this point).

In a remark obviously calculated to allay the anxiety of his listeners, and possibly also of Moscow, over the somber economic picture presented so far, Mgeladze hastens to repeat that the present Party leadership is not to be identified with this sorry state of affairs, or at least not "entirely" identified with it:

It has now become clear to everyone that the praise...of the previous Secretary of the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party, Charkviani, and the outstanding advertising reports in the press and on the radio about the unprecedented successes in the welfare of Tbilisi were in reality a bluff and were deceptions of our society.

Turning to science, literature, art and education in general, the Secretary infers that many of the All-Union Party directives governing these endeavors have remained largely on paper. The Republic's Institute of Philosophy, for instance, whose duty it is to do research into the basic tenets of Communist dogma, "is neglecting questions of dialectical and historical materialism." Georgian philosophers are said to be limiting their activities to safe areas and narrow channels: "They should print their works in the Russian language in Moscow and Leningrad." The end product of their present efforts, it appears, is that the contemporary bourgeois theory "is not being criticized" enough, and too little stress is put on the "superiority" (preimushchestvo) of the socialist system over the capitalist system.

Literature is treated as another chink in Georgia's ideological armor. Very few worth while books have been written by local talent, and still fewer publications "of a genuine ideological stamp" have been produced in the past years. Here again the former Central Committee of the Communist Party is blamed for the present backwardness of literature. Literary critics are excoriated for the unsatisfactory job of exposing ideological distortions and decadence (razlozhenie) among some Georgian writers. Nor are they zealous enough in their attacks on bourgeois nationalism. The Writers Union, says Mgeladze, had better cleanse itself of "all remnants of the old days" because it is evident that some of the writers "have abandoned Soviet reality" (ostavili sovetskuyu deistvitelnost) and plunged themselves into the long distant historical past. The idealization of the past, the Union is reminded, is "an expression of bourgeois nationalism" and therefore an unhealthy field for literary ventures.

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Reference to Party activities below the Central Committee level is surprisingly restrained and lacks specificity. A number of rayon, town and oblast Party Committees (all listed) are said to be doing unsatisfactory work but no details are offered. The new crop of young Communist workers need "additional ideological hardening."

Trade Union organizations are discussed briefly in context of corruption in general and the inference is that there is nothing good to be said about them. "Weak and incapable people" (slabokharakternie i nesposobnie ludi) who had failed in their previous occupations were appointed to trade union leadership. Indeed the entire organization has come to be looked upon by unscrupulous careerists as a sort of vested interest having little to do with the welfare of the working people:

Many officials remained in trade union organs for dozens of years, were becoming accustomed to shortcomings, and were not keeping up with current affairs.

Law enforcement, always a vulnerable spot of Georgia's State machinery, is still claiming a great deal of official attention. This theme is referred to in Mgeladze's speech on two occasions in highly disparaging terms. Although the Republic's courts and public prosecution organs have recently shown some improvement in their work, the inference of a continuing purge of those institutions as mentioned also earlier in this report, is clearly evident from the following remarks:

Violators of Soviet laws and their supporters have been expelled from court and prosecution organs... The courts and prosecution organs are beginning to work better but there are still many shortcomings in their work... The courts and prosecution organs must be reinforced with politically tested...workers.

The Minister of Justice, the Republican Prosecutor and the Chairman of the Supreme Court will have a large amount of work to do, it is claimed, before the mentioned failings in their respective departments are "radically" eliminated and "a true Soviet order" (nastoyashchiy sovetskiy poriyadok) insured.

The oblique reference to the divisive tendencies under the previous administration made earlier in the speech, the discussion of the difficulties of law enforcement as a "heritage of the past" are brought up again in the context of the downfall* of the former Central Committee of the Party. The end of the old Party leadership, Mgeladze asserts, began with its "departure from the Stalin traditions" (otkhod ot Stalinskikh traditsiy), and that serious deviation had "predetermined ... the serious political collapse" (predreshilo...seryozniy politicheskiy proval). That the aftermath of that collapse is still being felt in Georgian SSR may be inferred from the speaker's revelation that

At present the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party is waging a resolute struggle for the restoration of the fighting Stalin traditions, for the integration of the Stalin method of work...

Russian version:

V nastoyashcheye vremya Tsentralniy Komitet Kommunisticheskoy Partii Gruzii vedet reshitelnuyu borbu za vosstanovlenie boyevikh stalinskikh traditsiy, za vnedrenie stalinskogo stilya raboty...

(Significant in this connection also is the mention of Lavrentiy Beria who is said to have "implanted" (privival) the above-mentioned traditions in the Communists of Georgia. This reference may have been made to reemphasize the implied disastrous consequences to the old Party leadership which, as Mgeladze remarks, "had doomed those traditions to oblivion" (predali ikh zabveniu).)

* The Russian word used is grekhopadenie, literally the downfall through sin, which is also employed, in a biblical sense, to denote the "fall of man."

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Official vigilance against actual and potential anti-Bolshevik elements within the Party, it is stated, is now more intense than ever, and the slightest manifestation of anti-Communism will be nipped in the bud:

We shall allow no one either from the old or from the present leadership to make any attempt at chieftainship which in the past few years prevented the Party from having a single will. Then there existed the wills of different chiefs who had gathered around themselves groups of loyal followers. Such anti-Bolshevik mores we must burn out with red hot steel.

Russian text:

Nikomu, ni iz starogo ni iz novago rukovodstva, my ne dadim vozmozhnosti ostavlyat kakie-nibud lazeiki dlya shefstva, kotoroye privelo k tomu, chto za poslednie gody ne bylo edinoi voli partiynoi organizatsii, a byla volya otdelnykh shefov skolachivavshikh vokrug sebya gruppy svoikh ludey lichno im predannykh. My dolzhny vysech kalenym zhelezom eti anti-bolshevitskie nrayy.

Career Communists and "continually repentant people" who should not be left in "leading posts" are admittedly still holding executive positions, and the record of their activities is somewhat less than lily white. Many of them, in fact, are still trying to enter into private agreements "behind the walls of the Central Committee" (s stenami tsentralnogo komiteta) on promotions and appointments with a view to carving bigger niches for themselves within the Party.

Kharlamov's account of the Georgian Party Congress published in PRAVDA on 20 September but not broadcast is significant in that it mentions some points omitted in Mgeladze's report. Whereas the latter speaks in the past tense, in his condemnation of the former Party leadership, Kharlamov uses the present tense in his reference to the Central Committee. Officials whose activities are criticized have a right to, and in fact should, speak up in their own defense. The reluctance of some Central Committee members to take advantage of that opportunity at the Congress, it is claimed, is significant:

One cannot help noticing that despite the serious criticism leveled at them, the heads of the Central Committee's Departments of Agitation and Propaganda and Art and Literature ... made no reports to the Congress.

Russian text:

Obrashchayet na sebya vnimanie tot fakt, chto nesmotrya na seryoznuyu kritiku v ikh adres, rukovoditeli otdelov propagandy i agitatsii, khudozhestvennoy literatury i iskusstva Ts.K. VKP(b) Gruzii...ne vystupili na s'ezde.

The delegates to the Congress, Kharlamov continues, were also "surprised" to learn that in his report on current literary affairs, the head of the Writers Union Leonidze did not even attempt to discuss the recurrent ideological perversions in Georgian literature or analyze the reasons for them. He even failed to give a satisfactory answer to the just criticism of the Union by the Congress. Kharlamov also quotes one of the Congress delegates as declaring that the Ugo-Ossetian Oblast Branch of the Writers Union has been doing its best to "kindle nationalist hatred" (razzhech natsionalnuyu nenavist) and foul up the literature with all sorts of "ideologically vicious works" (ideologicheski porochnye proizvedeniya). The nature of the mentioned publications, however, is not explained.

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Kazakh SSR

Slow Economic Progress and Remnants of Feudalism: Reviewing Kazakhstan's progress in a speech to the Sixth Republican Party Congress, Party Secretary Shayakhmetov focuses attention on the two chronic deficiencies of the Republic's life--lagging agriculture and a persistent feudal attitude among officials. Industrial production has been below expectations, and the "particularly noticeable" (osobenno zametny) shortcomings of the meat and dairy and fishing industries have made the consumer the ultimate sufferer. The consumer's lot is made worse, "extremely alarming" (kraino trevozhnoye) in fact, by the failure of agriculture to produce enough potatoes and vegetables. These, it is stated, will now have to be imported "from outside the Republic." Agriculture is still the weakest point of Kazakh economy, and tractor work the greatest deficiency of agriculture: "In no other branch of the national economy is there such mass technical idleness as in machine-tractor stations."

Oil Industry: The 1952 prospecting and operational plan is now further from realization than before--23.5 percent below the 1951 performance figure for the same period. The development of the Emba oil-bearing region in Guryev Oblast, although encouraged by the preceding Party Congress, has not even reached the initial stage, and is still referred to as "a problem" (zadacha). The construction of housing for the oil workers is even slower than oil production itself, the plan for the first 8 months of 1952 having been fulfilled by only 72.7 percent.

Power Production: The report familiarly refrains from citing specific figures, but points out that the energy supply situation in the large industrial rayons and oblast centers "continues to remain acute."

Metallurgical Industry: There has been some improvement in the organization of labor and the utilization of available equipment but there is still much more room for improvement, according to Shayakhmetov. The copper industry is working behind schedule, and "in the Republic as a whole" (po respublike v tselom) the lead production plan has not been fulfilled. The copper-lead production problem is said to be crying for solution in Karaganda, East Kazakhstan, South Karaganda and Taldy-Kurgan Oblasts. One of the suggested methods for improving the situation is, significantly, "a radical improvement" (rezkoye uluchshehie) in the living conditions of the workers which in turn will "liquidate the turnover of cadres."

Brief reference is made also to unspecified shortcomings in the chemical and machine-building industries and transportation but the theme is not pursued beyond a few vague allusions to high production costs and low output. Consumer production is taken up again, however, with the announcement that many enterprises of the cooperative industry alone fell short of their production quotas in the first eight months of 1952 by a total of 182 million rubles' worth of goods. The production of meat, dairy and fish products, it is reiterated, is "lagging the most." But the cause of the consumer has not been abandoned, according to the Secretary. The Minister of the Meat and Dairy Industry Yedigenov has been removed from his post for his failure to liquidate embezzlement of State property and for staffing the Ministry and its enterprises with "persons not inspiring political and labor confidence." The Minister of the Building Materials Industry Morozov has been "strictly warned" against a repetition of his unspecified misdeeds.

Communal economy, retail trade, finances and health service are said to have registered a "moderate improvement" but the situation on the whole remains quite unsatisfactory. Retail trade outlets are not always staffed with "tested cadres" and losses from "business mismanagement" are still substantial.

Agriculture--Kolkhoz Merger Still Disappointing: Shayakhmetov's lengthy discussion of the Kazakh agricultural situation provides some evidence that official concern over this aspect of the Republic's economy transcends even ideological considerations. The merging of the collective farms into fewer and larger units--7151 in 1940 into 3145 in 1952--has so far not produced the desired results: "It must be admitted that the

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kolkhozes are not solving the problems set forth by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party." What those problems were, and still are, is presented in a long list of dismal failures ranging from diminishing livestock herds to low pay for farmers and pilferage. Two thousand two hundred and sixty-two of the Republic's 3145 collective farms are reported to have incurred an indebtedness of 160.3 million rubles in 1951 alone, as a result of unaccountable expenditures and squandering of "indivisible funds" (nedelimie fondy).

The livestock industry, Shayakhmetov declares, "has been and remains extremely poor" despite all the Government's efforts to improve it. Deliveries of such livestock products as meat, milk, wool and others have been lagging behind plan "from year to year" (s goda v god). Of some interest are the first and the last of 10 reasons given by the Secretary as preventing the cure of the ailing industry. The "serious decline" (seryoznoye snizhenie) in the number of livestock is ascribed primarily to the improper breeding of the young animals, but that is not the only reason. Here Shayakhmetov refers to the "excessively large expenditures of cattle in kolkhozes for so-called internal economic needs" which, stripped of the familiar Soviet euphemism, means that the collective farmers eat too much meat. This "overeating" is said to have cost the State an additional 727,000 head of "all kinds of cattle" in 1952 alone. (It is worth recalling, in this connection, that excessive meat consumption by the collective farmers, always referred to as "so-called internal economic needs" has been the target of frequent criticism in the past in the Ukraine, Tadzhikistan and other cattle-breeding areas).

It is characteristic that the kolkhozes of the Alma Ata Oblast, for example, in July of this year delivered to the State one-ninth as many sheep as were used for internal economic needs. The kolkhozes of the Guryev Oblast delivered one-eighteenth, and the kolkhozes of Kustanai Oblast delivered to the State one-twenty fourth as many sheep as were used for internal economic needs.

The last and probably one of the most important reasons for the near-chaotic livestock situation is the human element involved. The Ministries of Agriculture and Sovkhozes as well as the appropriate Party organizations have shown a singular lack of consideration for the well-being of the stock-farm workers who, he asserts, "are not supplied with material and welfare services." Listed among the other serious shortcomings of the livestock industry are insufficient fodder preparations, lack of winter sheds and no progress in the development of pedigreed cattle and sheep.

Party Activities: Shayakhmetov's discussion of Party affairs is brief, and many of the shortcomings reviewed are familiar. He admits, however, that most of the mentioned failings are traceable to the Bureau or the Central Committee of the Party. Criticized also is the tendency of certain "leading workers" to entrench themselves in high Party positions and keep deserving young Communists out of executive posts. These bureaucrats, he says, have been keeping the same posts so long that they have lost perspective of Party work and are taking shortcomings for granted. Even the Central Committee itself is not entirely blameless in this respect. Personnel promotions in the higher echelons of the Party are either too slow or "incorrect and indiscriminate." This happened in the case of Justice Minister Nurbayev and Communications Minister Yerebayev who were expelled from the Party by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party for moral turpitude (bytovoye razlozhenie) and undignified behavior (nedostoynoye povedenie). The reference to the above Cabinet members is significant as an indirect method of self-criticism as it were. Having approved the appointment of the Ministers in the first place, the Georgian Party supposedly tolerated them even after their amorality and undignified behavior became known, and it therefore required the interference of the All-Union Central Committee to get rid of them. There are over

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29 thousand candidates for Party membership in Kazakhstan, according to Shayakhmetov, but this manpower reserve is not used to augment the Party ranks. Most of them are left to their resources, and admission to membership is extremely slow: "Candidate ranks remain as such for several years and become formal." Nor is the situation much better at the Komsomol organizations: they have not been too successful in educating the youth. Some of the Komsomol leaders, it is claimed, "have lost their sense of responsibility ... and are committing actions unworthy of Komsomol workers." The latter statement, however, is not amplified.

Prime Minister Taybekov and his five deputies are accused of being "extremely poor" in the matter of checking the implementation of their own decisions. They are said to be too tolerant of the errors and misjudgements of their subordinate Ministers despite the "subsequent bad effects" of their inept administration. Similar barbs are directed against the Kazakh trade union organizations for their inability or unwillingness to organize and maintain effective socialist competition in industry and agriculture: they appear to be "content with the showy side of competition."

There have been "certain improvements" in the field of ideology, says the Secretary, but it would be premature to affirm that the "survival of feudal 'Beyism'" (feodalnogo baistva) has been eliminated. This is particularly evident from the peculiar popular attitude toward Kazakh women. Even the Party organizations, it is hinted, do not appear overly anxious to improve the lot of the women in industry, agriculture and education. Responsibility for this, Shayakhmetov declares, must be shared by the Central Committee itself:

The Kazakh Central Committee's department for work among women ... is failing to show initiative in connection with the task of improving work among women and that of intensifying the struggle against 'Bey' feudalism.

Polygamy and the marriage of minors have often been criticized in the past as prevalent among Kazakh youth and even among Komsomols. Shayakhmetov does not refer to such practices by name but obviously has them in mind when he calls for severe prosecution of those "who violate the Soviet laws concerning the family and matrimony." Such manifestations of a feudal attitude toward women are "particularly numerous" in Dzhambul, South Kazakhstan and Kzyl-Orda Oblasts.

Marxist-Leninist ideological training, political lectures and agitation still contain "serious drawbacks," the general level of the work being too low. Mistakes of a "bourgeois-nationalist" nature are said to be still occurring in the social sciences, arts and literature. Some of the Republic's scholars, writers and historians "have strayed" from the Marxist-Leninist fold and socialist realism as a result of their "noncritical attitude" toward the recent past:

They idealized some reactionary khans and their servile poets. They represented incorrectly and distorted the great progressive significance of the union of Kazakhstan with Russia to the detriment of the interests of the sacred friendship of the Russian and Kazakh people.